

For immediate release
May 3, 2007

USIBWC APPOINTS CITIZENS' FORUM BOARD MEMBERS; COLORADO RIVER ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED AT MAY 15 PUBLIC MEETING IN YUMA, ARIZONA

The United States Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) announces the appointment of new board members to the Colorado River Citizens' Forum (CRCF). The first public meeting with the new board is scheduled for May 15, 4:00 p.m. at the Yuma Palms Regional Center Community Room, 1305 S. Yuma Palms Parkway, Yuma, Arizona.

United States Commissioner Carlos Marin has appointed the following board members:

- Tom W. Davis, Yuma County Water Users' Association, Yuma, AZ
- Kevin Eatherly, Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, Yuma, AZ
- Brian McNeece, educator and community volunteer, El Centro, CA
- Cary Meister, Yuma Audubon Society, Yuma, AZ
- Stella Mendoza, Imperial Irrigation District, Imperial, CA
- Wade Noble, irrigation district attorney, Yuma, AZ
- Bill Plummer, Yuma Mesa Irrigation and Drainage District, Yuma, AZ
- Richard R. Ryan, San Diego State University, Imperial Valley Campus, El Centro, CA
- Mark S. Watson, City Administrator, Yuma, AZ
- Nancy S. Wright, California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Palm Desert, CA

USIBWC Yuma Project Manager John Turner will serve as the agency representative on the board. Board members will serve a two-year term. The USIBWC appointed new board members to replace those whose terms had expired.

The USIBWC established the CRCF in 2003 to facilitate the exchange of information between the USIBWC and members of the public about Commission activities in Yuma County, Arizona and Imperial County, California. The CRCF is intended to bring together community members, enabling the early and continued two-way flow of information, concerns, values, and needs between the USIBWC and the general public, environmentalists, government agencies, irrigation districts, municipalities, and other interested parties.

At the May 15 meeting, USIBWC Public Affairs Officer Sally Spener will give an overview of Commission projects and duties of the Citizens' Forum Board. The Commission is responsible for applying the boundary and water treaties between the two countries. To carry out its responsibilities, the

Commission has various projects along the U.S.-Mexico border including international storage dams and diversion dams, wastewater treatment plants, flood control levees, and boundary demarcation monuments.

Also on the agenda, Jack Simes, Group Manager with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, will give an update on Yuma Desalting Plant operations. The Yuma Desalting Plant, located 5 miles west of Yuma, is the world's largest reverse osmosis desalting plant. When fully operational, it can produce about 72 million gallons of desalted water per day. The plant was constructed to help the United States meet salinity requirements for Colorado River water delivered to Mexico by desalting and salvaging drainage water that otherwise would be too saline to deliver to Mexico. The plant has been idle since 1993 but it is currently running in a test phase.

The Hunters Hole Pilot Restoration Project will also be discussed. The Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, in partnership with local, state, federal and private organizations is in the process of designing a pilot project for the Colorado River limitrophe – the 24-mile long portion of the river that forms the U.S.-Mexico border. The limitrophe faces many challenges ranging from illegal activity, public safety, invasive plants, and degradation of native habitat. Other issues include demarcation of the international boundary and balancing the security and environmental needs of the area.

The pilot project will address all of the opportunities and constraints that face this stretch of river. The area identified for this project is the Hunters Hole area in the southern portion of the limitrophe. Consultant Fred Phillips will present the draft design of this project.

A complete meeting agenda is attached. Members of the public who would like more information about the meeting can contact the USIBWC's Yuma Office at (928) 782-1598 or Public Affairs Officer Sally Spener at (915) 832-4175 or via e-mail at sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov.

For more information:

Sally Spener

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COLORADO RIVER CITIZENS' FORUM
Tuesday, May 15, 2007, 4:00 - 6:00 P.M.
Yuma Palms Regional Center Community Room
1305 S. Yuma Palms Parkway
Yuma, Arizona

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions - John Turner, Citizens' Forum Co-Chair
- Overview of IBWC Projects and Citizens' Forum Board Responsibilities - Sally Spener, Public Affairs Officer, USIBWC
- Draft Design of the Hunters Hole Pilot Restoration Project - Fred Phillips, Director of Fred Phillips Consulting
- Yuma Desalting Plant - Jack Simes, Group Manager, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
- Public Comment
- Suggested Future Agenda Items
- Board Discussion

Directions: From Imperial County, take I-8 east to Yuma to Exit 2, 16th St./US-95. Turn left onto 16th/US-95. Turn left onto Yuma Palms Parkway. Turn right onto Castle Dome Avenue. Drive to the stop sign and make a left. Continue to the back of the Sprint building. The Community Room is located directly behind the Sprint building west of Sam's Club truck parking. Parking is available in the back.

If you have a disability that you wish to self-identify confidentially that requires accommodation, please advise us ahead of time.

For more information, call 928-782-1598 or e-mail sallyspener@ibwc.state.gov.